

02.07.2024 – 10:54 Uhr

Latest Trend Study: Innovative Technologies are changing SAP® Application Management / Companies expect cost savings of up to 30 percent through AI

Bielefeld, Germany (ots) -

- Increasing complexity of the IT landscape makes seamless integration and communication between SAP and non-SAP applications a central concern for respondents.
- Cloud is the trend: Over 70 percent of the surveyed companies opt for the latest version of SAP S/4HANA, preferably in the cloud.
- High demands on SAP partners: Competencies in the security of SAP systems and smooth operation are among the must-have criteria at 77 percent.

To better understand the current status quo and future developments in SAP operations, the analyst firm [PAC](#), commissioned by the global IT service provider NTT DATA Business Solutions, surveyed 200 SAP and IT managers in Europe and the USA. The results of the study "[SAP Application Management in Europe and the USA](#)", conducted between January and March 2024, highlight the impacts and opportunities presented by innovative technologies. It provides insights into how companies manage their software applications and what challenges they face using SAP S/4HANA and developments in the areas of Cloud, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other innovative topics.

Innovative technologies such as Cloud Computing, Automation and AI are transforming SAP Application Management (AM) by providing new possibilities for efficiency and performance optimization. Simultaneously, the complexity of the evolving IT landscape is increasing, leading to new expectations for IT service providers: They must be knowledgeable about the latest technologies but also able to integrate and manage them effectively. The SAP Business Technology Platform (BTP) will play a crucial role as the technological foundation, creating a central platform for implementing various technologies and systems.

New technologies open new opportunities

In the international sample, most respondents (>70%) indicated they chose the latest version of SAP S/4HANA, with the majority preferring a Cloud version. The decision for the public Cloud is accompanied by a choice of RISE with SAP for 67 percent. The use of SAP software outside Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) is particularly strong in Customer Relationship Management and Customer Experience (CRM/CX), Human Capital Management (HCM) and Supplier Relationship Management and Procurement (SRM). With a share of 72 percent, Software as a Service (SaaS) models are mainly used to support individual business processes, such as SAP SuccessFactors for optimal management of all aspects of the employee lifecycle in Human Capital Management (HCM). In addition to SAP systems, many organizations use other software products from other leading platform providers like Microsoft (35%), Salesforce (30%) and Adobe (26%). However, the variety of business applications companies use alongside the core SAP system presents new challenges. "Seamless integration and communication between SAP and non-SAP applications are essential for operating both systems in parallel long-term," explains Ulrich Kreitz, Executive Manager at NTT DATA Business Solutions Germany and Head of Managed Services. "This often requires special interfaces, data integration strategies and tools, as well as solutions for managing user identities and access rights. Complex orchestration solutions must be implemented to monitor and control the performance, availability and security of on-premise and Cloud-based resources."

Strong SAP partners are crucial for SAP system integration

Collaboration with external partners, particularly in SAP consulting and system integration, plays a crucial role for many companies as system complexity increases, especially when it comes to cloud solutions. The respondents set high demands for an SAP partner: expertise in SAP system security and smooth operations are must-have criteria for 77 percent.

IT partners such as NTT DATA Business Solutions offer expertise and support companies in the implementation, management and optimization of SAP systems in the cloud. "We know the best practices, tools and methods that support, automate and accelerate Cloud migration. Additionally, we offer our own frameworks that can partially or fully automate tasks such as system monitoring, troubleshooting or patch management," adds Ulrich Kreitz. "The IT market is experiencing increasingly shorter innovation cycles. Soon, AI will take a firm place in SAP's products and the entire portfolio. SAP users expect their partners to act proactively and inform them about the benefits, opportunities and risks of new technologies, going far beyond ensuring smooth, secure operations."

Focus on Automation and AI

Respondents see significant potential in automated processes in SAP AM. The study found that the degree of automation is highest in the areas of Service Desk (31%), Security (37%) and Testing (46%). Automation not only increases efficiency but also reduces error susceptibility and identifies potential threats more quickly. Manufacturing companies particularly benefit from this, as operational interruptions are minimized and production continuity is ensured. The majority of respondents expect further efficiency gains and cost savings of up to 30 percent from integrating AI into AM, especially in Monitoring (71%), Documentation (79%) and System Administration (76%). The results show that SAP BTP will form the technological foundation for all SAP cloud products in

the near future, as well as for all functional extensions and innovations of SAP S/4HANA. It provides the ability to complement, extend and integrate solutions from SAP or SAP partners using the same data model. These help to develop innovations faster with traditional tools, no-code/low-code solutions, preconfigured analysis models and self-service analytics. As companies increasingly switch to the Cloud-based S/4HANA edition, the demand for SAP BTP also rises, as custom extensions need to be developed and integrated.

How complex digital transformation is for companies and what challenges it presents were highlighted by NTT DATA Business Solutions together with their subsidiary Natuvion GmbH in the recently released [Transformation Study 2024](#): 1,200 CEOs, CIOs and IT decision-makers from 15 countries shared their experiences with and requirements for the transformation process.

About NTT DATA Business Solutions

[NTT DATA Business Solutions](#) is a leading global IT service provider focused on SAP with a powerful ecosystem of partners. With more than 35 years of in-depth experience, we enable companies worldwide to become Intelligent Enterprises. We deliver end-to-end solutions that accelerate sustainable growth and success - from strategic consulting and implementation to managed services and beyond. As a global strategic SAP partner, we drive innovation and leverage the latest technologies to support our customers individually and across all industries. Our more than 15,300 dedicated employees in over 30 countries work passionately every day to make it happen.

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Press Contact NTT DATA Business Solutions:

Jasmin Straeter
Head of Global Communications
NTT DATA Business Solutions AG
Königsbreede 1, 33605 Bielefeld, Germany
Phone: +49 521 9 14 48 108
Email: Jasmin.Straeter@nttdata.com

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